

BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE

ANNUAL REPORT



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MISSION STATEMENT

A photograph of two men in professional attire. The man on the left is wearing a grey blazer and glasses, looking towards the right. The man on the right is wearing a dark blue suit, a white shirt, and a red patterned bow tie, holding a white document and looking down at it. The background is a blurred office setting with a window and some greenery.

To lead in the discovery of new scientific knowledge, advance medicine, educate the leaders of internal medicine, and provide high-quality compassionate care to our patients.

CARDIOLOGY



CHRISTIE BALLANTYNE, M.D.
SECTION CHIEF



BY THE NUMBERS

HIGHLIGHTS

The Section of Cardiology made major advances toward achieving comprehensive, state-of-the-art cardiovascular care, conducting cutting-edge clinical research, and training cardiology fellows. Faculty and trainees played important roles in local, national, and international meetings. Clinical accomplishments include increasing heart transplant volume at BSLMC, establishing a novel donor heart preservation program, and completing preclinical studies for the first-in-human implantation of the BiVACOR Total Artificial Heart.

MEDVAMC was the first VA in the nation to conduct a cardiac contractile modulation and MICRA leadless right atrial implantation. Ben Taub Hospital received Gold, Gold Plus, and Platinum Awards from the American Heart Association (AHA) and American College of Cardiology (ACC) for outstanding STEMI, NSTEMI, and heart failure care. Eleven faculty were named Texas Super Doctors. The section received \$1,132,392 in research funding. Faculty helped update AHA and ACC guidelines and were elected to leadership positions and editorial roles in scientific societies.



Drs. Ajith Nair and Paul Klotman



Fellow Welcome Party

SECTION HIGHLIGHTS

RESEARCH

BCM completed preclinical studies for the first-in-human implantation of the BiVACOR Total Artificial Heart. Dr. Arunima Misra received the AHA's Second Century Clinical Fellow Research Education Program Grant for Diversity in Cardiovascular Disease Research (CVD) and the VA COOP Study IMPACT grant. Dr. Tyler Moran was awarded an artificial intelligence (AI) grant. Dr. Michail Chelu is in the second year of his \$30.7 million PCORI grant for the Left vs. Left randomized controlled trial. Dr. Biykem Bozkurt received the Distinguished Leadership Award from the Heart Failure Society of America and the 2024 Bahr Award of Excellence from the ACC.

EDUCATION

The CVD Fellows were the national champions of the ACC Fellows In Training Jeopardy round in April 2024. The Journal Club established "Evenings with the Experts" to allow fellows to meet experts and gain knowledge and insight for their career paths. We implemented simulation training for both transthoracic and transesophageal echocardiography and used it to assess proficiency among first-year fellows. This year's Incoming Fellow Bootcamp included Drs. Jing Liu, Ali Denktas, Irakli Giorgberidze, Enrique Garcia-Sayan, and Arunima Misra.

The Houston EP Fellows Lecture Series was organized by Drs. Chelu, Schurmann, Vidal, and Dr. Mo Gad. Dr. JC Plana chaired the Expert Consensus for multi-imaging evaluation of cancer patients before, during, and after cancer therapy. Dr. Joanna Molina-Razavi, the President of the Texas Heart Institute Cardiac Society, held the Fifteenth Symposium. Dr. Mohammad Saeed directed the Ali Massumi Cardiac Arrhythmia Symposium.



Department faculty implants avier DR leadless pacemaker

CLINICAL

The Texas Heart Institute at BSLMC ranked #17 in the nation for cardiology and heart surgery by U.S. News & World Report. The Advanced Heart Failure team performed 41 heart transplants, increasing 24% from the prior year. They established "Donation after Circulatory Death" to expand the donor pool and implemented the Organ Care Heart System, which enabled the expansion of the donor radius. The Electrophysiology team introduced pulsed-field ablation. The Ben Taub Cardiology team received Gold, Gold Plus, and Platinum Awards from the AHA and ACC for outstanding STEMI, NSTEMI, and heart failure care. They established a leadless pacemaker program, began performing AFib ablations, and reduced ambulatory wait times from 400 days to 60 days. The wait for an outpatient echo was reduced from 60 to 14 days. They also doubled the number of structural procedures, catheterizations, and echocardiograms. The MEDVAMC Cardiology team pioneered several procedures, including the MICRA leadless right atrial implantation, cardiac contractile modulation, RESPICARDIA implantation, and extravascular and substernal ICD implantation. They were one of the first VA hospitals to use cryoballoon pulmonary vein isolation for paroxysmal atrial fibrillation and established a fully functional MitraClip program to treat mitral regurgitation percutaneously. They integrated advanced plaque modification therapies to treat coronary stenoses. Additionally, they implemented left ventricular global longitudinal strain in patients with left ventricular hypertrophy to identify cardiac amyloidosis and plan to continue a quality improvement project to implement work-up recommendations.



Drs. Enrique Garcia-Sayan and Raymond Stainbeck



FEATURED
HIGHLIGHTS

FACULTY AWARDS CEREMONY

Congratulations to the following:

- Dr. Sandra Haudek – The Barbara and Corbin J. Robertson, Jr. Presidential Award for Excellence in Education
- Dr. Rise Stribling – Master Clinician Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Andrew Caruso – John P. McGovern Outstanding Teacher Award in Clinical Sciences
- Dr. Stephanie Sherman – Graduating Class Outstanding Teacher Award
- Dr. Jose Perez – Star Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Jingyin Yan – Star Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Ruchi Gaba – Star Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Clark Hair – Star Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Sandeep Agarwal – Star Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- **Dr. Guilherme Silva – Star Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care**
- Dr. Tannaz Armaghany – Early Career Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Muhammad Ajmal – Early Career Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Sunjay Devarajan – Early Career Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Michael Holliday – Early Career Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Wallis Molchen – Early Career Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Rehman Sheikh – Early Career Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Purnima Sravanti Teegavarapu – Early Career Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care
- Dr. Charles Minard – Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation
- Dr. John Berens – Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation



FACULTY AWARDS CEREMONY

- Dr. Glynda Raynaldo - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation
- Dr. Leanne Jackson - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation
- Dr. Jaime Jump - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation
- Dr. Prathit Kulkarni - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation
- Dr. Sandhya Thomas - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation
- Dr. Ayse Mindikoglu - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation
- Dr. Doris Lin - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation & Educational Research
- Dr. Cory Ritter - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation
- **Dr. Ajith Nair - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation**
- Dr. Bryan Jiang - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation
- Dr. Mimi Tan - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation
- Dr. Shital Patel - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Teaching and Evaluation
- Dr. Ashley Meyer - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Educational Materials
- Dr. Faith Fletcher - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Educational Materials
- Dr. L. Parker Gregg - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Educational Materials
- Dr. Jessica Davila - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Educational Leadership & Educational Research
- Dr. Stacey Rose - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Educational Leadership
- Dr. Molly Horstman - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Educational Research
- Dr. Terri Fletcher - Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award – Educational Research



Dr. Ajith Nair (R) with Department Chairman



2023 STAFF AWARDS CEREMONY

On October 12, 2023, the Department of Medicine Administration Team hosted the inaugural Department of Medicine Staff Awards Ceremony to recognize our incredible staff teammates. With more than 150 submissions, the following awardees were recognized:

Top Teammate Award

- Allison Dobecka
- Payton Dugger
- Clarissa Perez-Machado
- Tracey Rosen
- Arnold Salazar



Innovative Thinker Award

- Liza Azara
- Laura Bautista
- Megan Kelso
- Jessica Sawhill
- Joseph Sayegh



Outstanding Character Award

- Meaghan James
- Leslie Mendez
- Chandler Williams
- Johnetta Williams

Emerging Leader Award

- Emily Havens
- Pandora Jubilee
- Anuradha Sudhakaran



Chair's Award

- Mariana Charles
- Christina Velasquez
- Leslie Wu

VICE CHAIR GROUP FOR HARRIS HEALTH & BEN TAUB

Chair: Hemant Roy, M.D.

The Vice Chair Group for Harris Health has had a successful academic year. **Cardiology expanded services with a robust electrophysiology practice supported by a new cath lab.** Pulmonary & Critical Care Medicine developed a multifaceted interventional pulmonary program. Gastroenterology is expanding at Quinten-Mease, and General Internal Medicine developed an efficient observation unit. Nephrology has dramatically expanded peritoneal dialysis services. Regarding quality, the department provided leadership to numerous committees, including medical executive, mortality, and utilization review. Academically, the second annual Ben Taub Hospital-BCM Research Day was a success with 80 posters. Internal Medicine trainees won several awards, including in translational research. Early-career faculty in oncology and gastroenterology have achieved ongoing research success, and Harris Health continues to be a preferred rotation for medical students. We implemented an evidence-based morbidity and mortality conference, which received outstanding reviews.



VICE CHAIR GROUP OF VETERAN AFFAIRS

Chair: Biykem Bozkurt, M.D., M.P.H.

The MEDVAMC medical service continue to be recognized as one of the best care models. Last year, it expanded access to more than 130,000 veterans at the Houston campus, Women Veterans Program, and community-based clinics. MEDVAMC had more than 2 million outpatient visits last year. The specialty programs continue to lead in comprehensive and complex care while managing high volumes. Highlights include a successful cardiac transplantation VAD program, a growing structural heart interventional program, and the highest number of cardiac catheterizations in the VA system. MEDVAMC is noted for its bundle pacing, cardiac contractile modulation, wireless pacemaker implantation, telehealth cardiac rehabilitation, lung cancer screening, interventional pulmonary, rapidly growing kidney transplant program, quality improvement initiatives, and national leadership in genetics. It has one of the largest VA continuous venovenous hemodialysis programs. MEDVAMC is a leader in patient safety. MEDVAMC faculty participate in the leadership of national gastroenterology, hepatology, and infectious disease professional organizations and in academic roles, including teaching the hospitalist program. MEDVAMC faculty are recognized for excellence in research, education, and academics at BCM and the national level.



MEDVAMC Primary Care Providers

FACULTY ACCOLADES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Cardiovascular Disease Fellows win 2024 ACC Fellows in Training Jeopardy Competition



FACULTY ACCOLADES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CARDIOLOGY

Hamid Afshar, M.D.

First VA hospital nationwide and first hospital in Houston to implant a AVEIR leadless atrial pacemaker, first VA hospital to implant a Integra-D combined CCM-defibrillator device to treat heart failure, first VA hospital to implant the Barostim CVRX device for treatment of heart failure, Associate Program Director of the BSLMC Electrophysiology Fellowship

Mahboob Alam, M.D., F.A.C.C., F.S.C.A.I.

Top Doctor, Houstonia Magazine; Voting Member, Membership and Credentialing Committee, Society of Cardiac Angiography and Intervention; Voting Member, NCDR PINNACLE and Diabetes Collaborative Registry R&P, American College of Cardiology and NCDR

Basant Arya, M.D., F.A.C.C., F.A.S.E.

Book chapter in print, *Clinical Echocardiography Review: A Self-Assessment Tool*, third edition, Chapter 25, "Durable and Temporary Left Ventricular Mechanical Circulatory Support Devices and Orthotopic Heart Transplantation"; Moderator, American Society of Echocardiography, Scientific Session, Portland, OR; Faculty Panelist, American Society of Echocardiography, Scientific Session, Portland OR

Yochai Birnbaum, M.D. F.A.H.A., F.A.C.C.

Editor-in-Chief, *Cardiovascular Drugs Therapy*; Associate Editor, *Cardiovascular Diabetology*; Section Editor, *J. Electrocardiology*

Biykem Bozkurt, M.D.

Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine® Fellow Designation; Those Who Light the New Century Award, Turkish Bahcesehir University; Clarivate World's Highly Cited Researchers (top 1% Web of Science); Houston's 50 Most Influential Women of 2023; Houston Woman Magazine; Distinguished Leadership Award, The Heart Failure Society of America; 2024 Bahr Award of Excellence, American College of Cardiology; Chair, American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology Joint Committee on Performance Measures; Editor-in-Chief, *JACC: Heart Failure*; Appointment, Senior Dean of Faculty, BCM

Andrew Civitello, M.D., F.A.C.C.

Chair, Common Spirit Health National Advanced Heart Failure and Mechanical Circulatory Support Clinical Council; Member, Heart Failure Society of America Advocacy Committee; Medical Director, BSLMC Heart Transplant Program; Program Director, BCM Advanced Heart Failure and Transplant Cardiology Fellowship

Ali Emin Denktas, M.D., F.A.C.C., F.S.C.A.I.

Chair of Federal Section, American College of Cardiology; Scientific Sessions Program Committee Member, American College of Cardiology; Field Advisory Committee Member, Veterans Administration; Federal Representative for the Board of Governors, American College of Cardiology; International Committee Member, Society for Cardiovascular Angiography & Interventions

Jose G. Diez, M.D.

Recipient, 2024 Award for Best Subspecialty Teaching Faculty, BSLMC; Publication, "The high stakes of performing Transcatheter aortic valve replacement in the patient at low surgical risk", *American Journal of Cardiology*; Presenter, Society for Cardiovascular Angiography & Interventions 2024; Presenter, 15th Heart Failure Symposium, Semmelweis University, Budapest, Hungary

FACULTY ACCOLADES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Savitri Fedson, M.D., M.A.

Chair, International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation, Ethics Committee

Enrique Garcia-Sayan, M.D., F.A.C.C., F.A.S.E.

Co-Chair, American Society of Echocardiography Advocacy Committee; Editorial Board member, *Journal of the American Society of Echocardiography*; Steering Committee member, the American Society of Echocardiography Interventional Echocardiography Council

Irakli Giorgberidze, M.D.

First VA hospital nationwide and first hospital in Houston to implant AVEIR leadless atrial pacemaker; first VA hospital nationwide to perform pulsed field ablation-pulmonary vein isolation; first VA hospital nationwide to perform substernal extravascular implantable cardioverter-defibrillator implantation

Waleed Kayani, M.D., F.A.C.C.

Recipient, Gold, Gold Plus, and Platinum Awards from American Heart Association and American College of Cardiology for outstanding STEMI, NSTEMI, and Heart Failure Care; co-authored 12 publications

Srikanth Koneru, M.D., F.R.A.C.P., F.A.C.C., F.A.S.E., F.S.C.M.R.

Member, American Society of Echocardiography Committee

Glenn N. Levine, M.D., F.A.C.C., F.A.H.A.

Vice-Chair, American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology Performance Measures on Chronic Coronary Disease; Chair, Publication of AHA Scientific Statement on Left Ventricular Thrombus; expansion of the MEDVAMC Cardiology Section; Member, Medicine Faculty Appointment and Promotions Committee

Ronald Maag, M.D., F.A.C.C.

Medical Director, Baylor Heart Clinic; Medical Director, Baylor Heart Clinic Echocardiography Lab; Medical Director, Baylor Heart Clinic Nuclear Cardiology Lab

Tyler Moran, M.D., Ph.D.

Recipient, 2024 Artificial Intelligence Request for Application, BCM

Ajith Nair, M.D.

Recipient, Norton Rose Fulbright, Teaching and Evaluation Faculty Award; Robert J Hall Teaching Award, The Texas Heart Institute; Associate Director, MS2 Cardiology Program, BCM; selected participant, Emerging Faculty Advanced Educator, Concepts, American College of Cardiology; Super Doctors List, Texas Monthly

Mourad Senussi, M.D., M.S.

Critical Care Medicine Attending of the Year; Golden Apple Educator of the Year, Department of Anesthesiology

Guilherme V. Silva, M.D.

Star Faculty for Excellence in Patient Care, BCM; Top Doctor, Houstonia Magazine

Raymond F. Stainback, M.D., F.A.S.E., F.A.C.C.

Chair, Oversight Committee, American Society of Echocardiography; Chair, Publication Committee, American Society of Echocardiography; Course Director, 14th Annual Houston Echo Review Boot Camp for 2024 Echo Board; Fellowship (2023–24 cohort) Leadership and Society Initiative, Graham School, University of Chicago; Chief, Non-Invasive Cardiology BSLMC; The Texas Heart Institute, completed final year in service

FACULTY ACCOLADES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Neil Strickman, M.D.

2,900th transcatheter aortic valve replacement performed at BSLMC, First Evolut FX + performed in Houston Texas for transcatheter aortic valve replacement; 2,400th carotid stent performed at BSLMC

John M. Suffredini, D.O.

Recipient, Excellence in Teaching Award, Interventional Cardiology

Rashed Tabbaa, M.D.

Created database for patients with Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection, Ben Taub Hospital; established "New Patients Initiative", Ben Taub Cardiology Clinic

Lola Xie, M.D., F.A.C.C.

Invited Speaker, Perioperative Mechanical Circulatory Support Symposium, Houston, TX; invited speaker, Cardio World 2024, Prague, Czechia; BCM site PI, ACACIA-HCM trial

Christie Ballantyne, M.D.

Five articles published in *New England Journal of Medicine* (including late-breaking clinical trials with simultaneous publication); President, National Lipid Association; Top 1% of cited researchers, Clarivate; #1 expert in LDL-C in the U.S. and #3 in the world, Expertscape; Recipient, Best Doctors in America, Texas Monthly Super Doctors

Vijay Nambi, M.D.

Board member, American Society of Preventative Cardiology; Prevention council, American College of Cardiology



Cardiovascular Disease Fellows win 2024 ACC
Fellows in Training Jeopardy Competition



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Department of Medicine would like to thank our department administration team, section chiefs, administrators, and staff, for their collective efforts in helping complete this Annual Report.

The report was prepared by:
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